
Certified Operator Training, education, and experience requirements

The State of Kansas, through the Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), administers a mandatory water and wastewater operator certification program. The program was begun in 1975 as a result of laws passed by the Kansas Legislature. The law requires all water supply systems and wastewater treatment facilities to be under the supervision of an operator certified by KDHE. The Legislature realized that proper operation of these facilities was essential to protect the health and environment of Kansans.

- **How the program is administered** – the program is administered through KDHE and provides for five certification levels for water operators, and five certification levels for wastewater operators. There is currently no mandatory certification program for distribution system, collection system or laboratory personnel.

In order to achieve certification, an individual must attain competency through study, training, and on-the-job experience. Once a minimum amount of experience has been gained, the individual must pass a written examination. Upon passing the written examination, KDHE issues a certificate to the operator. The certificate must be renewed every two years. Prior to renewal, operators must attain continuing education in some aspect of their certification area.

- **How reciprocity is handled** – KDHE is a member of the Association of Boards of Certification (ABC) and maintains reciprocity with the ABC water and wastewater examinations. In almost all cases, we reciprocate on certificates issued by states whose examinations are also reciprocal with ABC. In other words, if you have a certificate from an ABC-certified state, you can probably obtain a Kansas certificate. For states not reciprocating with ABC, reciprocity is awarded on a case-by-case basis.

Requirements *What you have to do to become certified*

Prior to taking an operator certification examination, an operator must meet four requirements:

1. Currently own or be employed by a water supply system or wastewater treatment facility.
2. Have a high school diploma or GED.
3. Have acquired the minimum number of years of experience for the class of examination desired (*see the table below*).
4. Have acquired the minimum number of *points* for the class of examination desired. Points are awarded based on experience, education, and training (see the table below).

<i>Class</i>	<i>Points*</i>	<i>Years of Experience</i>
<i>Small System</i>	<i>12.5</i>	<i>6 months</i>
<i>I</i>	<i>13.0</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>II</i>	<i>14.0</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>III</i>	<i>16.0</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>IV</i>	<i>18.0</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>*See the back page for a listing of point values</i>		

Once the minimum requirements are met, the operator must submit an examination application form, and a \$25 examination fee to KDHE. For information on the dates and location of examinations, we can be contacted at 785.296.5511 or at KDHE's web site: www.kdheks.gov/water/www.html

If you wish to obtain a certificate through reciprocity, you must submit a completed *Request for Reciprocity form*. A copy of the form may be obtained by contacting us at the telephone number listed above, or from KDHE's web site. It is particularly important that you submit a copy of your certification from the state where you are currently certified.

If reciprocity is awarded by KDHE, there is a \$35 fee.

Training *How you obtain the necessary training in Kansas*

Training is a vital part of the Kansas certification program. Training is helpful in obtaining initial certification, and it is mandatory for renewal of a certificate. Ten hours of training are required during every two-year renewal period for Class I – IV water and wastewater certificates. Five hours of training are required every two years for Small Systems certificates. *See the last page for a listing of training credit hours awarded for various training activities.*

Kansas is fortunate to have numerous quality training opportunities available. Training in Kansas is typically provided through the following outlets:

- Environmental Consulting Services (ECS), Fort Scott Community College (FSCC), Great Plains Institute (GPI), Kansas Laboratory Education (KLEA), Kansas Rural Water Association (KRWA), Kansas Section American Water Works Association (KSAWWA), Kansas Water Environment Association (KWEA), Kansas Water Training (KWT), Midwest Assistance Program (MAP), and Salina Area Technical School (SATS). Copies of training schedules can be obtained from KDHE or at KDHE's web site: www.kdheks.gov/water/www.html
- The KDHE annual Water and Wastewater Operators School. The School is held each year around the first week of August in Lawrence, Kansas.
- In-house training, vendor training, and private training. Training falling in this category must be pre-approved by KDHE.

Training/Experience Credit

Training/Education Experience	Credit Hours*	Experience Points
1-day training**	6	0.0
2-day training**	10	0.25
KDHE Annual School		
• 2 days	10	0.25
• 3 days	15	0.50
High School diploma or General Education Development diploma (GED)	NA	12.00
College education – each yr	NA	1.00
• 30 semester hours		
Operating experience – each yr	NA	1.00
• Must be involved in daily operation and/or		
• Must be full time – full time means on the job during the working day for the plant or system.		
Cal. State Univ. Courses	NA	1.00
• Per volume		
Approved semester-long Courses	54	1.50
Approved 2-yr environment technology degree	NA	6.00
Approved Training	40	1.00
• 40 contact hours		

* Hours do not carry forward to subsequent renewal period

** Training must be pre-approved by KDHE

Operator Certification



Education, Training and Experience Requirements

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